

First Connection

A Publication of First United Methodist Church of Blue Springs

November 28, 2018

Volume 12, Issue 12

Advent Sermon Series

Our Advent Sermon Series, titled "Calm and Bright," will begin the week-end of December 1-2 and conclude the Sunday after Christmas.

Advent Schedule

Breakfast with Santa—Saturday, December 8, 8:30-10:30 a.m., room 117

Pancakes, scrambled eggs, and ham will be on the menu. Santa will be in the sanctuary to take the children's lists. The United Methodist Men invite you to bring a new or gently used toy to breakfast so they can be collected and sent to area agencies to distribute to those less fortunate. Cost of the breakfast is a freewill offering and pictures are \$2. All proceeds go to the Paul Rand Scholarship Fund.

Chancel Choir Cantata—Saturday, December 8 at 5:00 p.m., December 9 at 10:45 a.m.

Advent Music Fest—Saturday, December 15, 4:30-7:00pm

Soup and chili will be served beginning at 4:00 p.m.

Please bring a holiday dessert to share. Music will begin at 4:30 p.m. If you would like to participate, please contact Kathy Ford at 228-7596 or kathyjdf@aol.com. We will not be providing childcare.

Longest Night Service—Friday, December 21, 7:00 p.m.

Sometimes "Joy to the World" sounds like it applies to everyone in the world but you. If you are looking for a worship experience that speaks to your darker hours, join us for this powerful service.

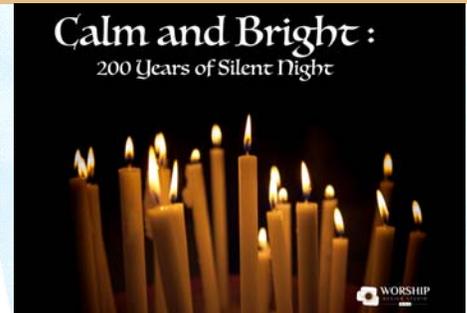
Christmas Eve Services

4:00 p.m.—Children and Family Service. This is casual, participatory, and maybe even a little noisy. The young ones will get glow sticks for our candlelight carol. Come as you are and bring the family.

7:00 p.m.—Contemporary Christmas Eve. Led by our 9:30 worship band, this service will feature some of the finest new and traditional music, culminating in communion and candlelight.

10:00 p.m.—Traditional Christmas Eve Service. Join us for the story of Christ's birth told in the context of some of the best-loved hymns. We will welcome the Christ child with communion, candles and carols.

Note: If you would like childcare for the 4 or 7 p.m. services, please contact Kristi at kharris@bluespringsumc.org by December 16.



Christmas Eve Offering *Feed My Starving Children*

Our goal is to give away 100,000 meals to people who are hungry! Help us raise \$20,000 on Christmas Eve to meet this goal. Please put February 1 and 2 on your calendar to help pack meals. See the pastor's column on page 2 for more details!

First UMC's Mission Statement:
Making faithful, hopeful, loving disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Dear First Friends,

It is my joy to share with you news of our Christmas Eve Offering 2018!

First, allow me to remind you of the great things that we have accomplished over the years. Six years ago, I realized that we could magnify the impact of this annual offering by giving it away. This idea was antithetical to what I thought was conventional wisdom. After all, like every other church, we rely on year-end giving to complete our budget. I was surprised to note that, in spite of our large worship attendance at our Christmas Eve services, our offering was relatively lackluster. What would happen, I wondered, if we stepped out in faith and *gave away* our Christmas Eve offering?



The first year was mosquito nets. The UMC had partnered with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to stem the spread of malaria by providing mosquito nets throughout malaria-ravaged areas. That Advent, not only did I talk about the love of God made manifest through the coming of Christ, I spoke about the impact of malaria on lives of women, men, and children. Do you remember the Christmas tree on the chancel that was decorated with large mosquitoes? Our families and children started working together to see how many nets we could provide. I remember one child telling me proudly about the number of mosquito nets they were going to buy with their saved allowance. That first year, we more than *quadrupled* our typical Christmas Eve offering, raising over \$17,000! Not only that, but our year-end giving for our operating budget was the highest ever, allowing us to pay our apportionments in full.

Every year since then, great things have happened as a result of our Christmas Eve offering. We were able to dig two wells in Mozambique, and your generosity meant that we were able to dig in some of the more expensive and hard-to-reach areas. We sent lifesaving water filters for Haiti. We bought a bus for Kuumba, a Methodist ministry of first-generation African immigrants.

Last year, our Christmas Eve offering provided the money to hold a mobile food pack for Feed My Starving Children. Not only did we raise the money, but we packed the food ourselves in a fun-filled weekend. It was great to see families with their children working alongside older adults, talking and laughing while we had a direct impact on world hunger.

We had so much fun last year that we're going to do it again this year! Our Christmas Eve giveaway offering will go to funding another mobile food pack with Feed My Starving Children. Best of all, be sure to mark February 1-2 on your calendar for the food packing.

Start thinking about how you can participate in this offering. Feel free to tell an adult relative that, instead of another necktie or useless doohickey, you're giving them the gift of food for hungry people. (You could even invite that person to join you for the mobile food pack.) Help your children and grandchildren think of creative ways to raise or save money to help other people. Allow our Christmas Eve giveaway offering to become a teachable moment in your family. I look forward to seeing you on Christmas Eve to celebrate the birth of Christ, and then again on February 1-2 as together we create good in our world.

Blessings, Sally

November 3-4, 2018		
Giving:	2018	2017
One Fund.....	\$20,042	
YTD One Fund	\$819,982	\$813,223
 <u>Worship Attendance:</u>		
Worship.....	412	
Sunday School		
Children.....	60	
Youth.....	8	
Adults.....	110	
Total	178	
Sunday/Wednesday Evening Youth: 11		
More detailed financial information is available at the information table in the lobby or in the church office.		

November 10-11, 2018		
Giving:	2018	2017
One Fund.....	\$17,036	
YTD One Fund	\$837,017	\$837,799
 <u>Worship Attendance:</u>		
Worship.....	328	
Sunday School		
Children.....	44	
Youth.....	7	
Adults.....	98	
Total	149	
Sunday/Wednesday Evening Youth: 31		
More detailed financial information is available at the information table in the lobby or in the church office.		

November 17-18, 2018		
Giving:	2018	2017
One Fund.....	\$20,678	
YTD One Fund	\$857,695	\$849,950
 <u>Worship Attendance:</u>		
Worship.....	508	
Sunday School		
Children.....	61	
Youth.....	6	
Adults.....	114	
Total	181	
Sunday/Wednesday Evening Youth: 35		
More detailed financial information is available at the information table in the lobby or in the church office.		



First UMC Children's Ministry

Weekly Sunday School—Join us every Sunday morning at 9:15 and 10:40. There are classes for 3-year-olds and up. Nursery is available for all worship services, birth through two years old.

IMPACT YOUTH
ministry

Join us:
—Sunday mornings at 10:45 in room 014 for Sunday School!
Youth Groups meet on Wednesday evenings at 5:30 in room 014!
Youth Fellowship Groups meet on Sunday evenings in room 014.
*All Youth Small Group at 4 p.m. (every other week)
*High School Bible Study at 6:30 p.m.
All are welcome—students and parents!

First Connection

First Kids

Contact Michelle Mueller-Hinton at mmueller-hinton@bluespringsumc.org

Wee Singers, Children's Chimers and Power Praise Kids

Wee Singers is for children ages Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 1. They meet on Sundays at 10:15 a.m. in room 116. Contact Brooke Roskop at broskop@bluespringsumc.org.

Children's Chimers

Children in grades 2 through 5 have the opportunity to develop their musical skills through Children's Chimers (hand chimes). Chimers meet on Sundays at 10:40 a.m. in room 154. Contact Liz Mueller at e.a.mueller@sbcglobal.net.

Power Praise Kids

Are you ready for some Really, Really Good News? Can you help us solve the mystery of the Good Samaritan?

If so, come join our Power Praise Kids this year! Detectives must be 2-5th grade to go on the hunt. We'll be looking for clues to reveal the modern-day good-guy (or girl?) and shout the Good News!

Come explore our music, snacks, and recreation every Sunday afternoon, from 4-5 p.m. in room 116. For questions, call the Lead Investigator: Linda Cox, 898-3608, or Assistant Investigator: Stephanie Marker, 220-9094.

Impact Youth Ministry

Contact Erika Braun at ebraun@bluespringsumc.org

December:

What could be more fun than locking over 20 Youth in the church building overnight?! Ask me after we have our Youth Lock-In on December 7!

You heard me right, people! The Youth are celebrating Christmas early by having a lock-in in the second weekend of December.

We will be going to see the beautiful Christmas lights at Longview Lake's "Christmas in the Park," doing a gift exchange, eating lots of snacks, and probably not sleeping. Mark your calendars now!

If your Youth would like to join the fun, please RSVP to Erika by December 1.

If you would like to come serve us a meal that Friday night at 6 p.m., please let me know.

Look for our wonderfully talented Youth at the Advent Fest on December 15.

Erika



Congratulations to our 2018 Confirmands

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| Tyler Baer | Abigail Collins |
| Hanah Forlow | Genely Gordon |
| Matthew Gorsline | Kayla Marker |
| Kiera Miller | Emma Jane Ogle |
| Abigail Pacas | Sophia Schnetzer |
| Brek Sloan | Nathan Stokes |
| Jade Vanatta | Tyler Wyzard |



HEALTH CONCERNS

Shirley Connelly Marti Dietrich Jody Fails
Judy Gregston Maxine Hall Vicki Kerr
Gloria Kniffen Jean Moore Wayne Ogilvie
Pat Parr Phyllis Sell Chere Semple
Tony Tesar Bobby Tiffin Steve Young
Karen Zymball
Arthur Galendez, per Marisa Gilbert
Beverly England, friend of Gwen Wheeler
Bill and Jean Best, per Marisa Gilbert
Brie Gallagher, Mike Gallagher's brother
Brad Moretti, per Steve and Donna Bell
Carla, Jan Harris' cousin
Chris Whippo, per Marisa Gilbert
Cynthia Payne, per Annette Hoel
Dakota Sawyer, per Marisa Gilbert
David Finkemeyer, per Cyndi Sloan
Erin, Elsa Tuttle's daughter
Helen Merrill, Joyce Maggard's sister
Jackson Hood, Jim and Marti Dietrich's grandson
Jodie Gallagher, per Mike Gallagher
John Norman, per Alice Nathan
John Pettineo, per Dee Meek
Karen Gangestad, friend of Gwen Wheeler
Kelly Campbell, per Roma Twxel
Ken Eshelman, per Linda Platt
Leila Lenning, Richard Lenning's mother
Lester Williamson, per Jan Balcom
Marilyn Callighan, Jean Moore's sister-in-law
Mike Holsclaw, per Kim Hickle
Melissa Johnson, per Kathy Bozarth
Nancy Forth, per Jan Balcom
Nieko Glesbrecht, per Marisa Gilbert
Reba Morgan, Roswell Morgan's mother
Rita Thompson, Jean Moore's sister
Sharon Swafford, Glenda King's sister
Shirley Long, friend of Jean Moore
Steve Blomme, friend of Chuck and Kathy Ford
Sue Grinlinton, Kris Allen's sister
Teresa Hankins, per Marisa Gilbert
Tiffanie Mead, per Marisa Gilbert
Tucker Dye, Kathy Bozarth's nephew

SYMPATHY

To Joyce Maggard on the passing of her sister, Doris Marcus, on November 4.

To Larry and Chris McMullen on the passing of Chris' father, Orlin Reimer, on November 5.

JOYS

To Autumn Pacas and Marcus McBride on the baptism of their daughter, Mia Faith McBride, on November 18.



Table with columns: Date, Time, Location. Lists church activities from Sunday, December 2 to Thursday, December 13, including Wee Singers, Bible Study, and various rehearsals.



First UMC Missions News



Feed My Starving Children (FMSC)

As you heard last weekend in worship, our Christmas Eve offering will go to Feed My Starving Children for the second year in a row. This means we get to do another Mobile Food Pack!! We will pack food on February 1 and 2 in our gym. Watch for more information about registration. Please be praying for the volunteers that will be coming to pack. Please also pray for the children that will receive the food and those that will deliver it to them. If you participated last time, spread the word about how fun and meaningful it was!!! Mark your calendar and invite friends.

Attention High School and Middle School Students!!!

There is still plenty of time to join and raise money for a mission trip. Invite a friend. The more the merrier!! First UMC will be sending two youth mission teams out in the summer of 2019. One team will join our yearly Costa Rica mission team. This trip will leave on June 22 and return on June 29. Youth on this team must be in high school this school year. They also must have been on a mission trip with First UMC at least once in the past. Adults are also welcome to join the team. The other team will be traveling to Gatlinburg, Tenn. This team will depart on July 21 and return July 27. Team members on this trip must be in middle school or high school right now. The worksites will be individuals' houses and will include painting, wheelchair ramp building, and general repairs. Both teams will enjoy a fun and meaningful experience.

If you or your child is interested in any of these trips, please contact Brooke Roskop (broskop@bluespringsumc.org or 229-8108) or Erika Braun (ebraun@bluespringsumc.org or 229-8108).

Community Services League

You may have noticed the CSL giving tree in the church. It is now empty! We were able to fill barrels to be picked up this week. These items will be presented in their Christmas store for families to do their Christmas shopping. Thank you to all who were able to donate items for this great event.

Church T-Shirts

The Youth Mission Teams are selling church t-shirts as a fundraiser for their trips in summer, 2019. They will be on sale in the hall at the top of the education wing stairs this weekend, December 1 and 2, and next weekend, December 8 and 9. There are short- and long-sleeve t-shirts and crew neck sweat-shirts and hoodies with a new design. An order will be placed in mid-December. There will be another opportunity to purchase shirts in February.

Takeout Meals

The Youth Mission Teams are also taking orders for frozen food. The menu includes Cilantro Lime Chicken, Chicken Fajitas, Cheesy Potatoes, and Cheesy Corn casserole. If you are going to many holiday parties and need to take dishes, the cheesy potatoes or cheesy corn casserole are perfect and we will assemble them for you. During this busy time, it is nice to have a couple of meals ready to throw in the slow cooker. Let the youth assemble them for you! Orders will be taken this weekend, December 1 and 2. Meals will be assembled on December 5. Orders can be picked up starting December 8 and 9.

First Connection



Tuesday Team

Calling all handymen (and handywomen) who have availability on Tuesday afternoons! Would you like to join with a group of others for a couple of hours on Tuesday afternoons to do odd jobs around the church? The next gathering will be Tuesday, December 4, at 2 p.m.

If you've got questions, check with John Rosendahl (224-5660). All skill levels are welcome!

Grace Circle Annual Bake Sale

Our annual bake sale will be Sunday, December 16, before and after all services in the lobby. All items are homemade. Buy for your friends and neighbors! Proceeds help support local missions.



End-of-Year Giving

The last day to receive credit for a financial gift in 2018 is December 28, or postmarked December 31 if mailed.

Our church staff will be in the office until noon on Friday, December 28, and we have online giving available 24/7 on our website.

Follow this link to the church website: www.bluespringsumc.org, then look for the Connect Tab.

Widows' Support Group

The Widows' Support Group will meet on December 19 at 11:30 a.m. in room 117. This is a potluck luncheon. Bring your favorite dish to share.

Poinsettia Orders

The Altar Guild will be decorating the sanctuary once again this holiday season. If you wish to purchase a poinsettia to be placed in the sanctuary or the narthex, please complete the order form in your bulletin. Orders must be placed by Sunday, December 9. The cost is \$10 per plant. Dedications will be printed in the bulletin the weekend of December 15/16. Poinsettias can be taken home following the last service on December 23.



Join us for Food, Fellowship and Service the first Saturday of each month at 8 a.m. in room 015. Our next gathering is December 1. All men of the church are welcome!

**UMW Christmas Luncheon
"Joyful Christmas"**

Friday, December 7, Room 117, 10:30 a.m.
Our celebration this year will be hosted by Wesleyan Women.

The Joy Ringers bell choir will present the program.

Tickets are \$12 and will be available in the lobby this weekend.



**Rhapsody Ringers to Perform at
Free Christmas Concert**

Our Rhapsody Ringers handbell choir, under the direction of Jennifer Arth, will join the Heritage Philharmonic for the fifth consecutive year at their annual Christmas concert.

This free concert will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, December 8, at the Blue Springs High School Performing Arts Center.





Invitational Ministries Information

Early Registration is NOW OPEN

Day Camp – July 15-19, 2019, ages 6-13. \$100
9–4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Register BEFORE January 30 and receive \$25 off of your registration.

Refer a "First Time Camper Friend" and both the "friend" and the person referring them will receive a \$20 discount.

www.eaglelakecamps.com/FirstBlueSprings

Have any questions/Interested in Volunteering or Sponsoring a Scholarship – contact kharris@bluespringsumc.org.

December First Meal Ministry

Our First Meal Ministry will be December 26, 2018; 5:00 – 6:30 p.m. Please contact Kristi at kharris@bluespringsumc.org for more information or to volunteer your time.

Church Food Pantry

First Meal Ministry will be packing bagged non-perishable meals and hygiene items from our supplies to hand out at the December Meal Ministry. If you are able to donate extra, we need the following: macaroni and cheese, soup, pasta sauce and pasta, cereal, peanut butter, jelly, crackers, canned meat, canned fruit or single serve fruit cups, canned vegetables, canned chili, toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, small bottles of shampoo/conditioner/soap. Anything that is not used will be in the pantry for others who come in requiring assistance. There will be a basket at the information table where you can drop off your items or feel free to bring them to the church office. Any extra donations would be appreciated to help add items to our church pantry.

Independents' Nut Sale

The Independents will be selling nuts and snacks in the narthex the weekend of December 1-2, and December 8-9 before and after worship services.

These are great for your holiday baking and gift giving! Proceeds go to the Independents' Scholarship Fund. Pre-orders are welcome and encouraged.

To place an order to have ready for pickup on one of the above dates, please contact Brenda Yanney at byanney@gmail.com, or pick up an order form in the lobby.

Hospitality Table Volunteers and Door Greeters Needed on Christmas Eve!

If you would be willing to help out at the Hospitality Table or be a Door Greeter on Christmas Eve, please call or email the church office at office@bluespringsumc.org. Help is needed at 4:00, 7:00, and 10:00pm.

Christmas Cookies Wanted for Christmas Eve

The United Methodist Women invite anyone who bakes to bring one or two dozen cookies to one of the services for Christmas Eve.

You can also drop them off at the church office until noon on Monday, December 24.



First Connection

First United
Methodist Church

Blue Springs

Ministers

All members who have pledged to uphold First UMC with their prayers, presence, service, gifts, and witness.

Pastors

Rev. Dr. Sally Haynes
email:
shaynes@bluespringsumc.org

Erika Braun
email:
ebraun@bluespringsumc.org

Worship

Saturday, 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, 8:15 a.m., 9:30 a.m.,
and 10:45 a.m.

Office Hours

8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m.
Monday-Thursday

8:00 a.m.—noon Friday

Church Office: (816) 229-8108
Church fax: (816) 229-6705

Email
office@bluespringsumc.org

Learning Ladder Preschool
(816) 229-9949

Church Website
www.bluespringsumc.org

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Blue Springs UMC



November 28, 2018

First United Methodist Church
of Blue Springs
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End 2018 with Family!

Mark your calendars now! We are coming together on December 30 to celebrate a combined Fifth-Sunday service! We will have only one service this fifth weekend, on Sunday at 10:00 a.m., and it will be followed by a potluck at 11:00 a.m.! (This means NO Saturday night service that weekend.) We are providing the meat for the potluck and are asking that everyone bring a dish to share. Childcare will be offered through 4th grade during the service time, but all are welcome to join us in worship. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to come together as the family that we are, worship our Lord together, and then share a meal! What an amazing way to end the year! Please invite a friend to come with you and join us for this wonderful service! If you have questions please contact Pastor Erika.

Last name: A-M—vegetable or potato

Last name: N-T—salad

Last name: U-Z—dessert

Worship Service Survey Results

On behalf of the Leadership Council, I would like to thank everyone who took the time to share your thoughts about our worship service schedule. As a result of comments by nearly 300 members, the Council has decided NOT to change the times of our worship services. Many comments encouraged us to find ways to improve attendance rather than reduce the number of services. We also received several recommendations about additional changes you would like to see in our services, which we will continue to review.

One of these changes was to find a way to bring the entire congregation together for special worship opportunities. The Council has asked Pastor Sally and staff to plan one joint service on each of the five months that a fifth Sunday occurs over the next year. The first one will be at the end of this month. You can read more about the service elsewhere in this newsletter.

Advent provides the perfect opportunity to share our amazing church family and offerings with your extended family, friends and neighbors. Please take this opportunity to invite others to join you in attending your favorite service each week as we share the love of Jesus Christ.

Blessings to all,

Randy Williams

Leadership Council Chair